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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 000111

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [EFIN](#) [ETTC](#) [YM](#) [KWAC](#) [COUNTER](#) [TERRORISM](#) [TERFIN](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR AND FONMIN DISCUSS ZINDANI, IRAN, AND GTMO

REF: A. STATE 10554

[B](#). STATE 4645

[C](#). 2005 SANAA 3618

[D](#). SANAA 0091

[E](#). STATE 9449

Classified By: AMBASSADOR THOMAS C. KRAJESKI, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#). (C) Summary. In a January 21 meeting, FonMin Abubakr al-Qirbi presented Ambassador with a copy of President Saleh's response to President Bush's December 30 letter protesting ROYG support for UN-designated terrorist financier Sheikh Zindani and HAMAS leader Khalid Mishaal (ref A). Qirbi continued to justify the inclusion of Zindani as a way to politically marginalize the powerful Sheikh and his extremist views. Ambassador reiterated ref B points on USG concern over the blatant violation of UNSCR 1267, stressing that the ROYG must immediately follow through on their obligation to freeze Zindani's assets and ban his travel. On Iran, Qirbi said "let us see what happens," adding that the ROYG expected a visit soon from the Iranian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. Finally, Ambassador delivered ref E files and urged an immediate reply to post's November diplomatic note proposing the transfer of 13 Yemeni detainees from Guantanamo Bay. End Summary.

Marginalizing Sheikh Zindani

[2](#). (C) FonMin presented Ambassador with a copy of President Saleh's response to President Bush's December 30 letter protesting (1) the inclusion of UN-designated terrorist financier Abdul-Majid Zindani in the ROYG's official delegation to the December 6-7 Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Summit in Mecca and (2) reception of HAMAS political chief Khalid Mishaal in Sanaa (ref A). Qirbi continued to characterize the conscious decision to include Zindani as an attempt to "get him out of the (opposition) political camp." He rhetorically asked if the USG really wanted Zindani arrested and tried, saying the ramifications of attacking a powerful opposition supporter could potentially damage CT-cooperation.

[3](#). (C) Ambassador reminded Qirbi that Committee 1267 obligations are narrow, calling only for the freezing of assets and the banning of travel. These simple yet required steps, he continued, must be taken regardless of internal political dynamics and were essential to demonstrating Yemen's commitment as a partner in the Global War on Terror.

Comment

[4](#). (C) Comment: Despite clear protestations from Department and post, ROYG continues to consider isolating Zindani a much greater political problem than flouting its UN obligations. Until the underlying factors driving this calculation change, either through a neutralization of Zindani as a political force or the threat of serious consequences for the 1267 violation, ROYG policy is unlikely to change.

[5](#). (C) Comment continued: ROYG remains uncommitted on referring Iran to the Security Council. Qirbi has requested a meeting with the European, Russian and American Ambassadors on January 25 to discuss Iran, at which time he may provide more insight into the likelihood of ROYG support at the February 2 IAEA Board of Governors meeting. End Comment.
Krajeski